



Monthly Report of observations of evictions by the Human Rights Observers in Grande-Synthe, Nord - June 2021

Since 2017, the aim of the Human Rights Observers project has been to observe and document the daily human rights violations of displaced people at the French-British border *.

Data collected during evictions of informal living sites :



At least 8 evictions of informal settlements



At least 260 tents and 257 tarps seized



At least 1 arrests during evictions



At least 60 unaccompanied children met

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The political strategy of avoiding "fixation points" has led to increasingly frequent evictions in Grande-Synthe. Some sheltering options, with buses, are forced, as those who resist are arrested by the Police aux Frontières. During these operations, all shelters, along with personal belongings and basic necessities, are seized and destroyed. These operations of harassment are also accompanied by often abusive identity checks (Cour de cassation, 25 avril 1985, n ° de pourvoi 84-92916), followed by arbitrary arrests and illegal stays in administrative detention. These arbitrary ID checks and arrests are daily, outside the context of evictions as well.



Knives are systematically used by the cleaning team to destroy tents and other personal belongings in Grande-Synthe. Tents continue to be lacerated by the cleaning team under the supervision of law enforcement. HRO teams observed one tent being slashed by the cleaning team while there were still people inside. Once the tents slashed, all personal belongings into them are emptied out onto the ground.



The law enforcement representatives present to guarantee the good progress of an eviction operation contributed to increase the tension. Indeed, they formed a line and moved forward without stopping while there were personal belongings and people in front of them. The personal belongings were crushed and the people were forced to move back, without a translator present to explain the situation. HRO observers noted that an entire eviction operation took place without a translator at least twice. When the HRO teams wanted to talk to the head of the operation to question him about the presence of translators, officers explicitly prevented them from doing so and said that it was not necessary because: "we know how to make ourselves understood". The HRO teams heard racist remarks from the police towards the present exiled people: "they are grains of rice" and "it's better if we light everything with gas, we are 10, we don't let anything pass, in case a Jew would pass by".

Harassment of human rights defenders during observations



45 intimidation attempts :

HRO observers were subjected to arbitrary identity checks 24 times. The legal basis for the identity checks was not communicated despite requests from HRO observers. HRO observers were escorted 10 times. One observer was aggressively pushed by an officer 4 times while he was being escorted. When the observer asked for the RIO of the officer who pushed him, the officer replied "it is going to end with custody". The HRO observers were insulted by law enforcement representatives at least 3 times ("suceuses de bites", "kassos" and "islamo-gauchistes"). Law enforcement representatives filmed HRO observers with a personal or business phone at least 3 times.

* This data is based on our observations, and is therefore not exhaustive.

** The number of reports made to authorities is below the actual number of unaccompanied children present and in danger in Grande-Synthe during June 2021. On this territory, contrary to Calais, no association that is not mandated by the State has any specific activity targeting UACs or is able to carry out this precise identification work. One observation remains: repeated evictions are a source of increased fragility and even disappearance of these children, both girls and boys, and therefore of increased risks of trafficking and exploitation (Source: Utopia 56).